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INFO RUEHXX/ARAB ISRAELI COLLECTIVE PRIORITY
RUEHGG/UN SECURITY COUNCIL COLLECTIVE PRIORITY
RHEHNSC/WHITE HOUSE NSC PRIORITY

UNCLAS JERUSALEM 003464

SIPDIS

SENSITIVE
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NEA FOR FRONT OFFICE, NSC FOR ABRAMS/DORAN/WATERS, USAID
FOR KUNDER/MCCLOUD/BORODIN

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [PREL](#) [PHUM](#) [ASEC](#) [CASC](#) [KPAL](#) [KWBG](#)

SUBJECT: MGGZ01 - JERUSALEM AUGUST 8 SITREP

11. (SBU) SUMMARY: Gaza was generally quiet overnight August 7-8. Five Qassam rockets were launched from Gaza into Israel, but there were no reported injuries or damage. In the West Bank, IDF forces arrested three wanted Palestinians. Several staff members at the PA Prime Minister's office in Ramallah were hospitalized August 7 after they opened an envelope containing a suspicious substance. Hamas officials have described the incident as an "assassination attempt." Jailed PLC Speaker Aziz Dweik was transported to an Israeli hospital August 7, reportedly suffering from chest pains. The Rafah, Karni/al-Mintar and Nahal Oz crossings are closed August 8. END SUMMARY.

Military Developments

12. (SBU) Gaza was generally quiet overnight August 7; however three Qassam rockets were launched from Gaza toward the Western Negev on August 7 and an additional two were launched on August 8. There were no reported injuries or damage.

13. (SBU) In the West Bank, IDF special units arrested three wanted Palestinians near Qalqiliya on August 7.

14. (SBU) A 48-year old Palestinian farmer from Duma in the northern West Bank was shot and killed August 6 and his son was moderately injured when unknown gunmen fired on their truck near the Zatarah checkpoint. Palestinian witnesses claim that the gunmen were Israeli settlers.

Political Developments

15. (SBU) The Prime Minister's office in Ramallah received an envelope containing a suspicious substance on August 7, which resulted in several employees going to the hospital after being exposed to the envelope's contents. The envelope was sent to a Bir Zeit University laboratory for tests. President Abbas ordered an investigation of the incident, but Hamas officials claim that the envelope was an "assassination attempt."

16. (SBU) PLC Speaker Aziz Dweik, who was arrested by Israeli forces on August 5, was transported to hospital from his detention center August 7. There are conflicting reports as to the cause of his hospitalization, but Palestinian sources report that Dweik has a history of heart problems.

Humanitarian Update

17. (SBU) The Rafah crossing remains closed August 8. PLO Chief Negotiator Sa'eb Erekat told the Consul General that he had been informed by the GOI that the crossing could open for two days (August 9-10) to allow individuals in the following categories to leave Gaza: businessmen, those returning to jobs overseas, students returning to study overseas, and humanitarian cases. (Note: The Rafah crossing had been slated to open August 5, but this opening was canceled due to military operations in the area. End note.) Both the Karni/al-Mintar and Nahal Oz crossings are closed August 8 but were operational August 7, according to USAID Gaza-based staff. According to the USAID Gaza-based staff, Karni/al-Mintar crossing was closed for 48 hours in order to put in place new security arrangements.

18. (SBU) All ten electricity feeder lines from Israel into Gaza are operational on August 8, thereby meeting 50 percent of Gaza electricity demand. The feeder line into the Rafah area, that had been damaged August 2, was repaired late on August 7 by the Gaza Electricity Distribution Company (GEDCO).

WALLES